

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1246

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

C O N F I D E N T I A L KULALA LUMPUR 5445

/EXDIS/

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XA, XB, SM, SF, EG

SUBJ: ARAB AND SOVIET CRITICISM OF PRESIDENT SADAT IN WAKE
OF EGYPT-ISRAEL AGREEMENT

REF: STATE 214848

1. I CALLED ON THE NEW EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR ADEL SAMI GUENENA PER REFTEL. HE HAS RECENTLY COME TO KUALA LUMPUR FROM CAIRO WHERE HE SERVED AS CHEF DE CABINET OF THE VICE PRESIDENT. HE IS YOUNG, INTELLIGENT AND WELL INFORMED ON THE EGYPT-ISRAELI AGREEMENT. AFTER I HAD EXPLAINED MY MISSION, AMBASSADOR GUENENA SAID THAT EGYPT'S RELATIONS WITH MALAYSIA WERE PARTICULARLY CLOSE AND CORDIAL. THE GOM, HE SAID, SUPPORTED EGYPT'S MODERATE POSITION AND WAS STRONG IN ITS PRAISE OF THE AGREEMENT AND PRESIDENT SADAT'S LEADERSHIP. THESE VIEWS HAD BEEN EXPRESSED NOT ONLY TO HIM, BUT IN THE PRESENCE OF AMBASSADORS FROM ARAB STATES WHOSE GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN CRITICAL OF PRESIDENT CONFIDENTIAL

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SADAT AND THE AGREEMENT.

2. GUENENA WENT ON TO SAY THAT EGYPT HAS BORNE THE BRUNT OF SUFFERING FROM THE WAR, MUST TAKE A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP, AND IS WILLING TO ACCEPT INEVITABLE CRITICISM ARISING FROM THIS ROLE. HE DIDN'T SEEM CONCERNED ABOUT CURRENT LEVEL OF ARAB AND SOVIET CRITICISM.

3. HE SAID THAT HE HAD BRIEFED MALAYSIAN OFFICIALS ON THE AGREEMENT AND EXPRESSED COMPLETE SATISFACTION WITH THE GOM POSITION. A PUBLIC MALAYSIAN ENDORSEMENT OF SADAT AND THE AGREEMENT WOULD NOT IN HIS JUDGMENT HAVE A HELPFUL INFLUENCE ON ARAB OPINION. HE EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR OUR WILLINGNESS TO APPROACH THE MALAYSIAN GOVT, BUT SAID THAT A U.S. DEMARCHE MIGHT BE MISINTERPRETED AND URGED ME TO LEAVE THE PROBLEM IN HIS HANDS.

4. I CONCUR IN HIS JUDGMENT AND UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO THE CONTRARY, WILL NOT GO TO GOM ON THIS MATTER.

UNDERHILL

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